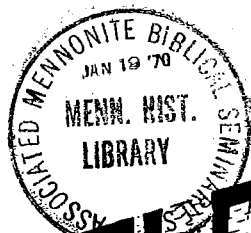


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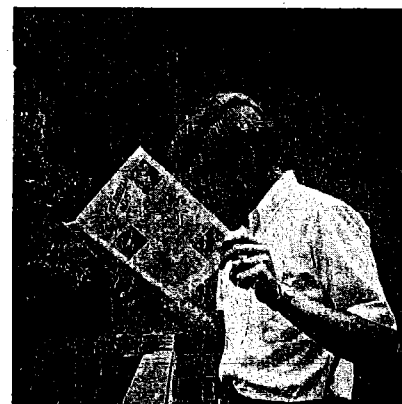
THIS IS A  
CALL TO PRAYER  
FOR  
THE LORD'S WORK  
IN  
COLOMBIA



# COLOMBIAN NEWS

Cachipay, Cund., Colombia, S. A.

NUMBER FIFTY-FOUR



INFORMATION SERVICE OF THE MENNONITE MISSION IN COLOMBIA

## ANSWER--RADIO PROGRAM REACHES MANY



The radio program Answer was started in 1966 because of anxiety created by many problems in society caused by sin and ignorance of spiritual matters. The purpose of the program is threefold: to help people resolve their own problems and to restore their partly destroyed personality; to present Jesus Christ as a solution to those problems; to make known the Holy Scripture and its message so the individual can fulfill the two purposes above if he is able to live its teachings.

The Reverend Armando Hernandez started the program in the city of Ibague the first Sunday in March of 1966, using the broadcasting station "Ondas del Nevado" (Waves of the Snow Peak). The program lasted almost three years on this station. The time block was given without cost and was a half hour long each Sunday. This program opened opportunities for special dates during Holy Week and the Christmas season. Also, during the time of religious campaigns, time was given for a daily program related to the campaign.

When the Hernandezes left the city of Ibague, the program remained in the hands of the new pastor of that Mennonite church. The program was changed to a completely religious service, offering no counseling. Reverend Hernandez became interested in presenting the program in Bogota, and asked the Ibague pastor if it would be possible to change the title of the program that he was presenting. With this agreement, Answer was moved to the capital city for broadcast on "Nuevo Continente" (New Continent).

The result of the Ibague program is that many people came to have a personal interview. They were helped to orient themselves to their own situation and were presented with the evangelical message. Christ was presented as the best choice to find the solution to their problems. Several of these people accepted the advice and are now active members of the church in that city. In Bogota several interviews have taken place with people who have heard the program and have had the confidence to contact the speaker. Interviews are being arranged through the National Evangelical Office, where invitations to attend church and visit homes are made.



At the present time several necessities are contemplated and have been established as goals. The first would be to have a recorder to preview large tapes. The second need is to have a record player for use in the musical ministry. The third goal is to have a chronometer to accurately measure the programs' length in order to fully utilize the allotted time. It is thought that if the above should be achieved and tapes be produced, the program could be easily presented on other stations, and many more people could be reached. We pray that the Lord will lead us, and we ask our friends that they also pray so that His name may be honored through the work and that needy people find the spiritual help that will lead them on the road of life.



#### UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITIES IN LITERATURE

"What effect does climate have on literature outreach?" questioned the Reverend John Wiebe recently while traveling in the warm regions of Colombia. In Girardot, an average-sized city in the hot country, the manager of the Chamber of Commerce asked why the Mennonite mission did not start a bookstore there. As proof of the interest in reading material, he stated that 17,000 books had been signed out of the public library during the past year. Traveling into yet a warmer climate, where the average temperature is about 100° F., Rev. Wiebe met with equally great interest in literature from people who had never seen anything resembling a bookstore.

At the Mennonite Retreat, some 1400 pesos worth of literature was taken to many Colombian homes. We have invitations to churches and conferences till the end of September. It was only in July that we started making these offers to visit churches. In this month alone, Christian literature sales have mounted to over \$5,000 pesos, which is one-fourth as much as our total sales for the previous ten months.

How much is \$5,000 pesos? In dollars it is only \$300, but in goods here it is much greater. The literature venture is only eleven months old, operated by a full-time pastor of one of our churches. In the first ten months, it has met with tremendous success. The time is here for capitalizing on the interest of the people. But, we will have to bring it to them. It is much easier and cheaper for us to go to them than for them to go to the few bookstores in the large cities. With personnel, vehicles, and funds, no limit can be seen for literature in Colombia.

#### RECREATION CENTER COMPLETED

In spite of some difficulty in obtaining building materials, and the greater difficulty of substandard working conditions, a new recreation court has been completed at the Colegio Americano in Cachipay. With larger and improved facilities, children of the school and area young people are able to develop skill in various sports--basketball, soccer, volleyball and tennis. Lynn Groff was in charge of the work on the new center and in organizing community youth for fellowship and recreation.



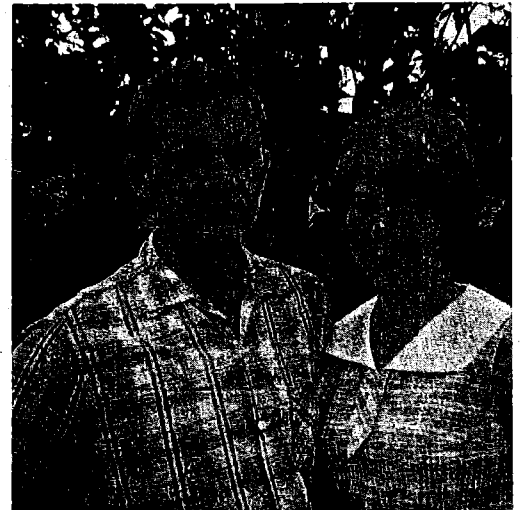


#### NEW WORKERS WELCOMED

Change is inevitably a part of modern life, and the Mennonite mission of Colombia is constantly experiencing change, especially in personnel. "Hasta la vista" (until we meet again) was a common phrase in recent months as five couples went North, for furlough or having completed a term of voluntary service. But welcomes have been in order also, as new workers have arrived.

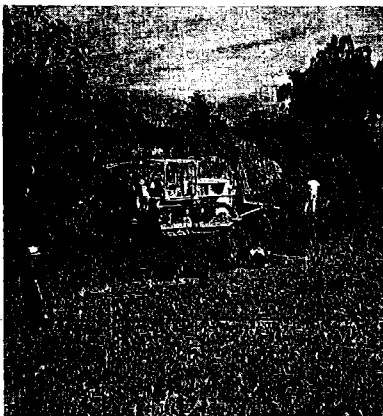
In April Leona Schrag completed a year of Spanish language study, preparing herself for service in Colombia. Leona grew up in Ritzville, Washington, and is a member of the Mennonite church there. She was graduated from Goshen College in the field of elementary education. Even before she came to Colombia, the mission board benefited from her willingness to work and serve the Lord. Leona was assigned work among Indian children of Oraibi, Arizona, and during those two years she found that teaching them was a challenge and a joy. Her present work has taken her to La Mesa, where she teaches and cooperates in church activities. In recent years the opportunity to serve the La Mesa community has been expanded, and Leona's presence on the staff will help meet the challenge.

Menno Church of Ritzville sent a second Christian worker to Colombia, Eugene Claassen. Gene is a native of Marlin, Washington, and was graduated from Bethel College in March where he studied industrial arts. While in Kansas he met Dorene Flaming, and they were married in December of last year. Dorene is from Goessel, and a member of the Alexanderwohl Church. She studied at Bethel College for two years in the field of secretarial studies and has worked as a receptionist. Although the Claassens have only been in Colombia for a short time, already they have made a significant contribution. Dorene is training secretaries for the Co-op. and Gene is involved in community development. The Mennonite mission of Colombia extends a warm welcome to these new workers.



#### NEW FACTORY IN CACHIPAY

Ground has been leveled and construction begun on a new factory located in the Cachipay area. Community women have organized, and they have received a loan from the Colombian National Agrarian Reform Institute to finance the project. The women will manage the business themselves. The factory will utilize the abundance of guava in the area to make bocadillos, a popular Colombian candy. The work will perhaps be expanded later to produce fruit juices and jams. A young girl who is being trained in secretarial work and accounting will become involved in the factory when finished.



### YOUNG PEOPLE BEING TRAINED

The Cachipay community development program has added several new young people to its ranks in recent weeks. The program is taking hold, and the youth of the area are showing much interest. Rosalba Vargas, a Cachipay native and graduate of the Colegio Americano, recently began training in secretarial work. She is presently assisting in the Cooperative, and will later be involved with the bocadillo factory. Another local person and also a graduate of the school, Silvestre Pulido, is learning general mechanics under the direction of Gene Claassen. Silvestre will operate a small tractor which has been purchased recently and will be available for rent by local farmers. Carlos Barbosa became involved in the program several months ago, when the bulldozer was working in his area, Pena Negra, a small village near Cachipay. Carlos drives one of the Caterpillars and is working with Gustavo Franco, another trainee who is a foreman of the road project and already training others. It is encouraging to see these young people become responsible community leaders.



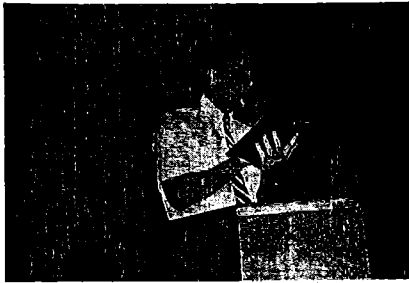
### BOGOTA CHURCH GROWS

Sunday, July 13, was a significant day in the life of the Mennonite Church of Bogota as seven new members were baptized by the pastor, Glendon Klaassen. The new members have all taken catechism and are presently active in church groups and functions. This was the second occasion of baptism for this church during this year. We pray for the continuing growth of the church, as well as for the churches located in other areas.



### MENNONITES OF COLOMBIA CELEBRATE RETREAT

As Colombian brethren gathered in the chapel of the Colegio Americano for three days in July, they were led into serious thinking concerning the work of the church. Individual members were challenged to consider their spiritual gifts and to use them constructively in the extension of the church. Laymen, in particular, were urged to dedicate their gifts and time rather than to think of their pastor as the one responsible. Simultaneously with the adults, children were enjoying their Bible and handwork classes.

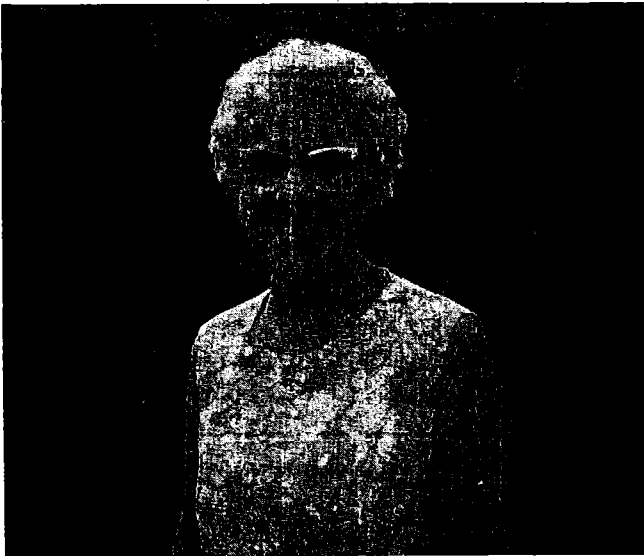


The annual business meeting of the combined churches was held the day immediately following retreat. As the members considered the various phases of the work of the church, they could perceive where the teachings of the previous days could be applied.



### HULDAH MYERS WEISS VISITS COLOMBIA

To remember is to live, and Huldah Myers Weiss crowded a lot of living into a short time as she returned to Colombia for a two-month visit to renew friendships with former students and church people. Huldah became acquainted with South America as a voluntary service worker, and later she joined the mission staff as a teacher in Bogota. She taught English there for two years, and in 1959 she went to Cachipay where she served until November of 1964. The love and admiration which her students have for Huldah is evident as they come to welcome her back and exchange experiences and memories. Huldah now resides in Milford Square, Pennsylvania, and continues working as teacher, friend, and counselor to primary-age children.



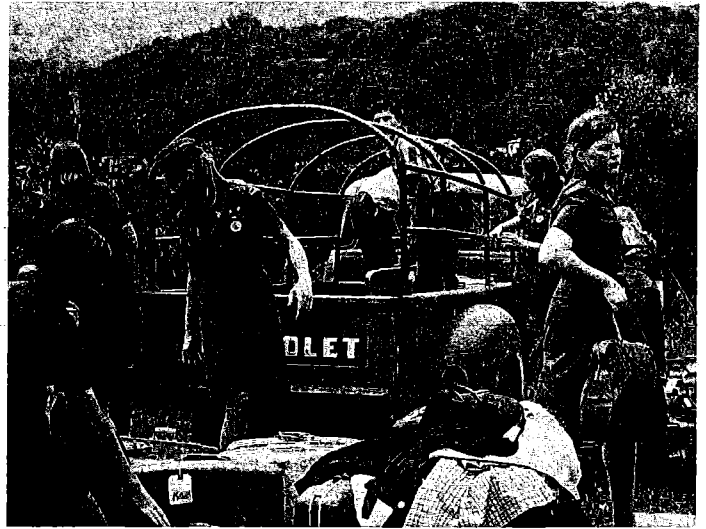
### LUIS CORREA JOINS STAFF IN CACHIPAY

Luis Correa, who has been well known as a church leader in this country, recently accepted appointment on the staff at Cachipay as coordinator of the various community projects. He is involved with the Cooperative, road building, bocadillo factory, and school. Luis is the first person to occupy this position, and is presently studying the work and orienting himself to it. He is a product of the Colegio in Cachipay. He has studied at the Mennonite Seminary in Montevideo, Uruguay, and has served as pastor of the Cachipay and Bogota churches. More recently Luis worked with Avianca Airlines. We wish Luis much success as he joins our staff.



### SUMMER VISITORS

Vacation months in the States are past and everyone has returned to his home and work or study. Colombia seemed to be an attraction, as many people came to enrich their lives with some knowledge of this culture and its people, and also to share some of themselves and their enthusiasm for life. Girl Scout Troop # 137 of Bluffton, Ohio, worked for three years to realize its dream of coming to visit a former troop member, Vicky Valencia, who now lives in Ibague, Colombia. The girls took on odd



jobs, planted a garden, presented operettas, all to raise money for their trip. To live up to their motto and be prepared, they took a course in Spanish and studied about Colombian geography, history, and culture. This lively and talented group of youngsters spent several days becoming acquainted with the mission at Cachipay, where they were received warmly by local people. A cultural exchange evening was shared in which the girls sang and heard presentations by various groups from the town. Mrs. Robert Kreider is the brave leader of the group, assisted by Mrs. Carl Lehman and Mrs. Robert Niswander.

Bluffton sent another group of ambassadors, this one from the College. Fourteen students spent two months studying and working in Colombia. Their activities included study of the Spanish language and of the Colombian culture, during which time they lived in

the capital city, Bogota, in the homes of nationals. The seminar ended with a two-week service project. Eight of these young people worked in community and school projects at Cachipay. They dug ditches, built fences, worked on the recreation court, painted neighborhood schools, assisted in the school, and did many other types of jobs. Their cooperation was appreciated. Mr. and Mrs. Ray Hamman of the Bluffton College staff accompanied the group.



### A VERY HAPPY ENDING

When the school term ends, the children have mixed feelings. They have had a lot of fun along with the studies. Promotion is a reality, too.

But there is an even greater reason for their joy. Colegio Menno in La Mesa received government approval in November. All studies will now be recognized in other schools.

This is the happy ending to a long period of waiting and praying plus doing a lot of "red tape." Rejoice with us.



### IMPRESSIONS

Recently, Judith Plata and Berta Correa returned to Colombia after serving one year under the Mennonite Central Committee in the United States. The following impressions were conveyed by Judith Plata to the church in Colombia.

I find myself very happy to again be in my country among my family and friends. At the same time I give thanks to God and MCC for the opportunity to travel to the United States of America, to learn the culture, customs, and language, and at the same time to work in the mission headquarters.

The first semester I was in Berne, Indiana. During the mornings, I worked in a business concern; and, in the afternoons, I went to the school to work in the office and associate with the students.

The second semester I was in Newton, Kansas, to work with the General Conference Commission on Overseas Mission. I had many experiences there which helped to form my personality. We shouldn't wait for just these good opportunities, for life brings various kinds of experiences which will be useful later.

I hope to return to the United States one day.

### A SEASON OF JOY AND THANKSGIVING

The staff of the Mennonite mission in Colombia wishes all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. During this Christmas season, we are all very grateful for the many blessings received.

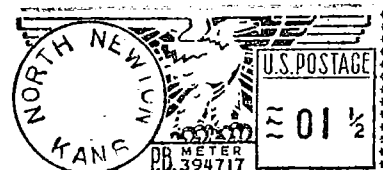
We are thankful for the support of the churches of the General Conference. We are also thankful for the many opportunities which are being presented, and pray for continued guidance in utilizing them.

We are greatly anticipating the new year and the challenges that it will bring. We pray and ask for your continued support.

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#### PRAISE AND PRAYER

PRAISE GOD for new church members and for the growth of our churches.  
PRAISE GOD for the visit of Andrew Shelly and Gerald Stucky.  
PRAISE GOD for the new workers who have joined the Colombia staff.  
PRAISE GOD for the arrival of two much-needed vehicles.  
PRAISE GOD for the active youth group in Anoliama.  
PRAISE GOD for the great success of the road-building project.  
PRAISE GOD for the increasing interest in Christian literature.

PRAY for those reached by the radio ministry.  
PRAY for new workers being trained in community development.  
PRAY for Janet Soldner in her work with Alfalit.  
PRAY for the George Edigers as they study at the seminary in Elkhart.  
PRAY for guidance in making long-range plans for the mission.